

a plurality of projecting support members disposed on said base member such that the projecting support members are arranged like a triangular lattice and distal end portions thereof are substantially positioned on a plane, wherein

the substrate is to be placed on said plurality of support members.

16. (Amended) An exposure apparatus which illuminates a first object with an exposure beam, and exposes a second object with the exposure beam via the first object, comprising:

a holder having a plurality of projecting support members disposed like a triangular lattice such that distal end portions thereof which are to contact the second object are positioned substantially on a plane, and

a stage system including a movable body in which said holder is provided.

Please add claims 28-38 as follows:

--28. (New) An apparatus according to claim 15, wherein

an interval of two projecting support members, which are disposed like a triangular lattice, of said plurality of projecting support members is determined according to an allowable deformation amount, a Young's modulus of the second object, and a thickness of the second object.--

--29. (New) An apparatus according to claim 28, further comprising:

a suction mechanism which is connected to said base member in order for the second object to be sucked to said base member, wherein

said interval is determined based upon the suction force of the second object by said suction mechanism.--

--30. (New) An apparatus according to claim 15, wherein

the second object is a semiconductor wafer having a diameter of approximately 300mm, and

the interval of two projecting support members, which are disposed like a triangular lattice, of said plurality of projecting support members is set to approximately 1mm to 3mm.--

--31. (New) An apparatus according to claim 15, further comprising:

a suction mechanism which is connected to said base member in order for the second object to be sucked to said base member side, wherein

a suction force of the second object by said suction mechanism is determined according to an interval of two projecting support members, which are disposed like a triangular lattice, of said plurality of projecting support members, an allowable deformation amount at the time of said sucking, a Young's modulus of the second object, and a thickness of the second object.--

--32. (New) An apparatus according to claim 31, wherein

the second object is a semiconductor wafer having a diameter of approximately 300mm, and

the interval of the two projecting support members, which are disposed like a triangular lattice, of said plurality support members is set to approximately 1mm to 3mm.--

--33. (New) An apparatus according to claim 15, wherein

said base member is disposed surrounding said plurality of projecting support members, and comprises a protrusion, a height of which is set lower than a height of said plurality of projecting support members.--

--34. (New) An apparatus according to claim 33, wherein

said protrusion comprises second projecting support members different from said projecting support members, distal end portions of said second projecting support members being positioned on the same plane on which said distal end portions of said projecting support members are positioned.--

--35. (New) An apparatus according to claim 18, wherein
said holder is disposed surrounding said plurality of projecting support
members, and comprises a protrusion, a height of which is set lower than a height of said
plurality of projecting support members.--

--36. (New) An apparatus according to claim 35, wherein
said protrusion comprises second projecting support members different from
said projecting support members, distal end portions of said second projecting support
members being positioned on the plane on which said distal end portions of said projecting
support members are positioned.--

--37. (New) An apparatus according to claim 20, wherein
said holder is disposed surrounding said plurality of projecting support
members, and comprises a protrusion, a height of which is set lower than a height of said
plurality of projecting support members.--

--38. (New) An apparatus according to claim 37, wherein
said protrusion comprises second projecting support members different from
said projecting support members, distal end portions of said second projecting support
members being positioned on the plane on which said distal end portions of said projecting
support members are positioned.--

REMARKS

Claims 1-7, 15-23 and 28-38 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 16 are
amended, claims 8-14 and 24-27 are cancelled and claims 28-38 are added. No new matter is
added.

The attached Appendix includes a marked-up copy of each rewritten claim (37 C.F.R.
§1.121(c)(1)(ii)).